City of Lafayette Staff Report

To: City Council

From: John M Luttropp, Associate Engineer

Date Written: November 12, 2008

Meeting Date: December 8, 2008

Subject: Happy Valley Road Pathway- Modifications from Franklin Lane to Valory Lane

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Introduction/Background

During the October 27 City Council meeting residents of the Happy Valley area requested that the recently constructed pedestrian pathway from Franklin Lane to Vallory Lane be reconfigured. The residents have asserted that the combination of high vehicle speeds and the close proximity of the path to the edge of the road is dangerous. Staff indicated to the City Council that the existing facility was designed after consultation with the neighbors at a publicly noticed meeting, is fully compliant with current standards and practices, and is consistent with similar facilities city-wide that have operated without any known history of safety issues. Nevertheless, the residents presented a petition for the construction of a split rail fence along the edge of the road to create a physical separation between vehicles and pedestrians. Other residents voiced a strong desire to see the pathway relocated away from the road, perhaps to the old pathway alignment that was on private property.

Since there appeared to be very different approaches to addressing the residents concerns, staff was directed to hold a public meeting to develop a consensus with regard to what type of modifications, if any, was desired for the pathway. Staff, along with Councilmember Andersson, held a well attended public meeting on November 11 and this staff report is to present the consensus direction achieved at the public meeting.

Neighborhood Consensus

The residents who attended the public meeting agreed on the following changes to the pedestrian pathway from Franklin Lane to Vallory Lane.

1. Paint the existing asphalt berm white to provide an additional visual delineation of the pathway from the edge of the road. Since the public meeting this suggestion has been implemented.

2. As an interim solution, the residents will construct a temporary base rock pathway in a location well away from the road and existing pathway. This work will be on private property and will be done as a volunteer effort, with the approval and cooperation of the fronting property owners.

3. The residents have agreed that they would prefer to have the permanent pathway relocated to a new alignment away from the edge of the road. This option will require easements for portions of the pathway that are relocated beyond the City's right of way. Staff intends to propose at most two options of this realignment for discussion by the neighborhood at future public meeting(s). If a consensus is reached, and funding can be achieved; the City Council could make the modifications a project for summer 2009.

Fiscal Impact

The relocation of the pathway is estimated to cost $56,000. At this time there is $16,000 in grant money remaining for the Happy Valley Pathway that could be spent on this reconfiguration of the pathway. At the public meeting the residents agreed to contribute towards the cost of this project but also indicated their intent to ask the City to share in the cost. The residents agreed to solicit neighbors with the intent to provide a contribution pledge at the City Council meeting.

At this time any additional City funding for the project would come from the General Fund.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council receive the report from residents regarding private funding for the pathway relocation and, based on this report, direct staff how to proceed.